incurred. The cumulative outstandings of the oil companies from the oil pool account which were Rs. 5701 crores as on 31.3.96 are estimated to rise to Rs. 15,500 crores by 31.3.97.

Payment of Royalty on Crude Oil to Local Level Groups in Nagaland

1350. DR. JAGANNATH MISHRA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the Nagaland Government for payment of 25% royalty on crude oil for allocation to local level groups, including Panchayats;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(c) whether the State Government has also given any guarantee for providing security for the oil installations and equipment, which was refused by it in 1994;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, what steps Government have taken to explore the possibility of the Indian oil companies to resume their operations in that State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Efforts are being made by the Union Government and ONGC to resume oil exploration and production operations in the State in consultation with the State Government.

Oil Selection Boards in Maharashtra and Punjab

1351. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Oil Selection Boards in Maharashtra and Punjab have been constituted;

(b) if so, the details of members of those Boards; and

(c) what steps are being taken to see that the Oil Selection Boards function properly?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) In order to ensure credibility and transparency in the functioning of the OSBs, suitable instructions have been issued to OSBs from time to time. Also there is a system to monitor the functioning of the Boards by Government periodically. It may also be mentioned that the functioning of the OSBs is currently in abeyance.

Fall in International Prices of Oil

1352. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in the Economic Times dated the 16th February, 1997 under the caption "Significant fall in international oil rates", if so, the details thereof;

(b) how Government propose to pass on the benefits of falling oil prices to the consumers; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) The prices of crude oil and petroleum products in the international market are highly volatile and are subject to vide fluctuations from time to time.

The outstanding payable for Pool Account is estimated to be about Rs. 15,500 crores as on 31.3.97.

The position of Pool Account is monitored continuously for remedial measures.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps and Gas Agencies Maharashtra

1353. DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that no action has been taken so far to allot petrol pumps and gas agencies in Maharashtra despite the interviews having been held by the OSB for the purpose in 1996;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps would be taken to effect early allotments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) All selection activities were stayed after the announcement of General Elections in March, 1996. In a large number of selections made by the OSB (Maharashtra, Goa Daman & Diu), Government guidelines were violated. Accordingly, taking into account all relevant factors, Government issued instructions to the Oil Industry on October 22, 1996, as to the manner in which the merit panels released by various OSBs, including OSB (Maharashtra), with inordinate delay should be dealt with. These instructions are a subject matter before the Mumbai High Court in a writ petition. Oil companies already have taken action in accordance with the above instructions.

Oil Production at Ravva Structure in Andhra Pradesh

1354. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) what is the daily production of oil at Ravva structure, off East Godavari district in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) what was the annual production from this structure in 1995-96, in tonnes;

(c) the expected production in 1996-97, in tonnes; and

(d) the cash value of the 1995-96 oil production of Ravva structure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Present average daily oil production from Ravva field is around 35,000 barrels (approx. 4673 tonnes) per day.

(b) Total oil production during 1995-96 was of the order of 157631 tonnes.

(c) Expected oil production during 1996-97 is 823560 tonnes.

(d) Value of oil production from Ravva field during 1995-96 works out to US$ 20.4 million.

Rise in International Prices of Petroleum

1355. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRI SUSHILKUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the oil import bill for the current year is likely to go much above the estimates with the rise in petroleum crude prices in the international market, causing a big budget deficit;

(b) if so, the extent of rise in international oil prices and to what extent it would widen the budget deficit; and

(c) the steps taken and proposed to be taken to bridge this gap?